

1 SJR84
2 215425-1
3 By Senator Allen
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 17-MAR-22

URGING THE ADOPTION OF PENDING FEDERAL LEGISLATION
REQUIRING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HEALTH REGISTRY FOR VETERANS
SUBJECTED TO TOXIC EXPOSURE AT FORT MCCLELLAN.

WHEREAS, Fort McClellan, located in Anniston,
Alabama, became a United States Army installation in 1917;
after World War II, and until its closing in 1999, Fort
McClellan was home to the Army's Chemical Corps and Chemical
Weapons School, later known as the Army Chemical Center and
School; the school offered eight weeks of basic training
followed by eight weeks of training devoted to chemical
warfare; in 1953, Fort McClellan secretly conducted Operation
Top Hat which used military personnel to test exposure and
decontamination methods that included sulfur mustard and nerve
agents; in 1962, the U.S. Army Combat Development Command
Chemical Biological-Radiological Agency moved to Fort.
McClellan; Fort McClellan was also the site of open-air burn
pits that were used in staging the Chemical, Biological,
Radiological, Nuclear, and High Yield Explosives (CBRNE) tests
until 1975; after a short-term relocation in 1973 to Edgewood

1 Arsenal in Maryland, both schools returned to Fort. McClellan
2 in 1979 and remained there until its closing; and

3 WHEREAS, in a 1998 U.S. Army Environmental Center
4 study, the Army noted the presence of dangerous contaminants
5 requiring investigation and clean up prior to transferring the
6 Fort McClellan property to the public domain; and

7 WHEREAS, in 2005, the National Academy of Medicine
8 recognized that both the groundwater and soil were
9 contaminated, finding that there were 67 different disposal
10 sites on Fort. McClellan containing volatile organic compounds
11 (VOC's), trichloroethylene (TCE's) polychlorinated biphenyls
12 (PCB's), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOC's) pesticides,
13 explosives, heavy metals (Pb), unexploded ordinance (UXO),
14 radioactive sources, and nonstockpile chemical materials; and

15 WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VA) has
16 noted the existence of toxic chemicals used at Fort. McClellan
17 and that potential exposures could have included, but are not
18 limited to, radioactive compounds (cesium-137 and cobalt-60)
19 used in decontamination training activities; chemical warfare
20 agents (mustard gas and nerve agents) used in decontamination
21 testing; friable indoor asbestos pollution inside barracks
22 buildings which all required remedial cleanup actions; and a
23 regional-sized PCB contamination zone in the neighboring town
24 where the Fort. McClellan personnel made use of public travel
25 stations and a retail shopping district; and

26 WHEREAS, the Monsanto Chemical Plant, located south
27 of Fort. McClellan in Anniston, was instrumental in the

1 development and testing of herbicides used during Vietnam and
2 settled a \$700 million class action law suit brought by the
3 residents of Anniston; the settlement explicitly excluded
4 those individuals who were exposed to toxic chemicals while in
5 military service at Fort McClellan; and

6 WHEREAS, while the VA acknowledges the use of toxic
7 chemicals and potential exposures, the VA does not recognize
8 any adverse health conditions associated with military service
9 at Fort. McClellan, despite evidence that exposure to high
10 levels of the aforementioned contaminants has been shown to
11 cause a variety of adverse health effects; and

12 WHEREAS, legislation relating to exposure of toxins
13 in the groundwater at Camp Lejeune, NC, passed with bipartisan
14 support from the North Carolina delegation; now therefore

15 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
16 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Legislature urges
17 Alabama's congressional delegation to support currently
18 pending federal legislation to study the effects of toxic
19 exposure during military service at Fort McClellan,
20 specifically HR 2825, introduced April 22, 2021, directing the
21 Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish and maintain a
22 health registry of veterans stationed at Fort. McClellan
23 between 1935 and 1999, and HR 3967, introduced June 17, 2021,
24 creating presumptions of service connection of certain
25 disabilities and diseases among veterans stationed at Fort.
26 McClellan.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF
2 ALABAMA, BOTH HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That a copy of this
3 resolution be provided to each member of the Alabama
4 Congressional Delegation so that the strong sentiments of this
5 body may be known.